

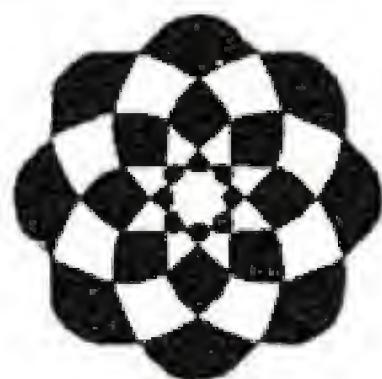
Mercy Oceans'

Divine Sources



Sheikh Nazim
al-Qubrusi

MERCY OCEANS' DIVINE SOURCES



The Discourses of Our Master
Sheikh Nazim Al-Qubrusi
(Imam ul-Haqqaniyyin)

Delivered with the Permission of
his Grandsheikh

Sultan ul-Awliya
Sheikh Abdullah Ad-Daghistani
(May Allah Sanctify his Blessed Soul)!



Selected Lectures

Summer 1403 A.H. (1983 C.E.) England and Germany

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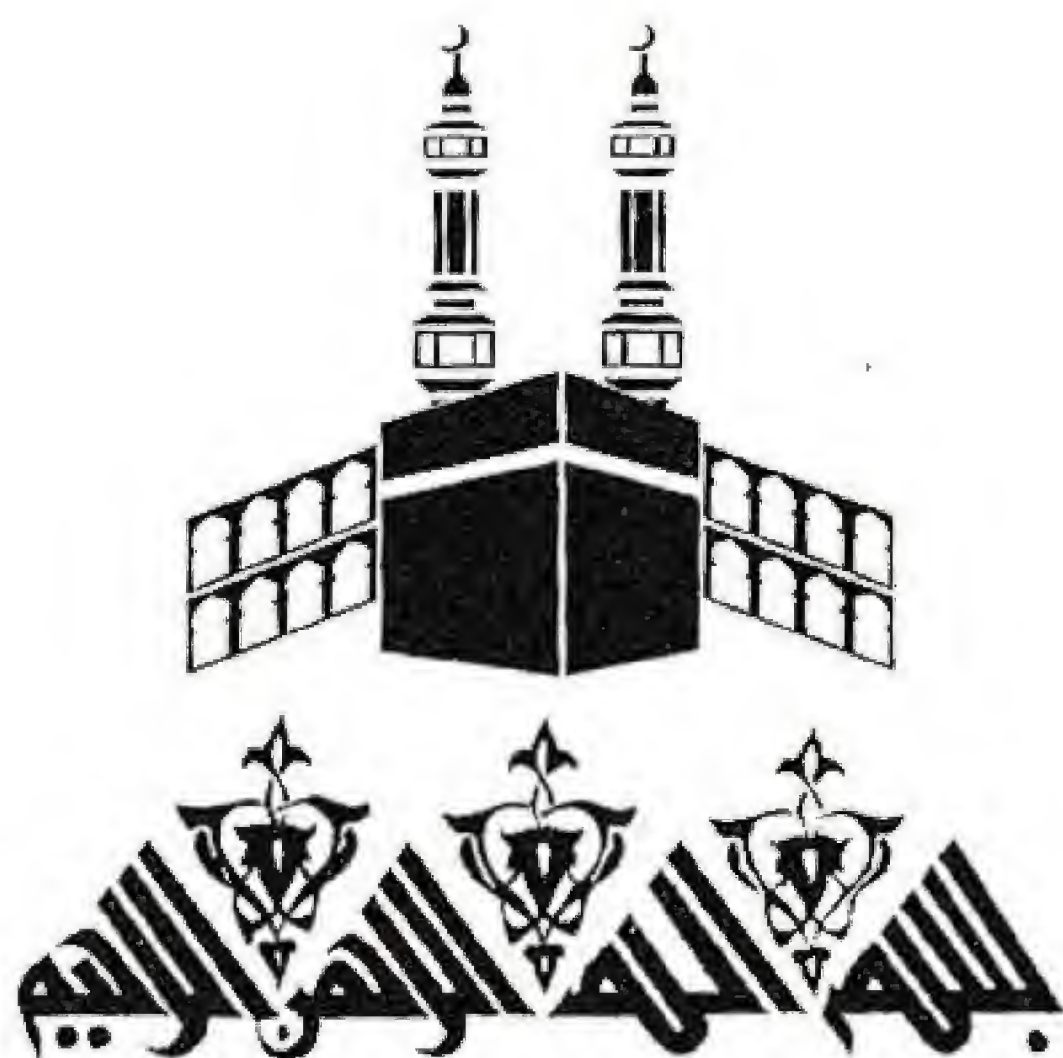
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TABLE OF CONTENTS



Meded : Asking Support from Grandsheikh ...	5
Fabrication Destroys Sincerity	8
About Peace	12
Why the World is always Divided between "Us" and "Them"	20
When Tragedy comes into our Lives, How can we keep our Faith in God's Mercy?	29
A True Dream is one-fortieth of Prophecy	36
Heart Medicine	41
Maintaining Peace in Marriage	46
Soul can Find Soul	48
The Purification of our Faith	52
Smoking : The Hole in the Door through which the Thief Enters	54
Music	57
Why Islamic Associations often go Wrong	65
Islamic Education for this Day and Age	68
Love	78



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE ALL-MERCIFUL,
THE ALL-BENEFICENT;
THE MOST-MUNIFICENT

MEDED: ASKING SUPPORT FROM GRANDSHEIKH

Our Grandsheikh is Sheikh Abdullah Al-Faiz Ad-Daghistani, may Allah Almighty sanctify his blessed soul and draw him ever closer to His Divine Presence. May He Almighty cause us to benefit from Grandsheikh's blessings and teachings, and from his spiritual care for us even from the grave. We derive our spiritual power from his heart center. If he cuts us off we are stranded. Every breath that our Grandsheikh turns toward us from his spiritual breaths is like a warm spring breeze which blows on the bare branches of trees, causing buds and blossoms to burst forth.

Like the spring breeze that carries the revival of life within it, so do the breaths of Allah's Saints give life to their followers, to their spiritual sons and daughters. That relationship is stronger than the relationship to our parents, as there is only a short period of time in which they are all and everything to their small children, and, ultimately, it is very difficult for them to influence their children to follow the way of life that they would choose for them. Perhaps those children will leave them and go away to the far corners of the Earth and choose a way of life totally unrelated to that of their parents. But a real Grandsheikh always keeps a watchful eye on his followers, whether that Grandsheikh be living in this world or already has passed on to the existence beyond this world. He never abandons them.

Yes, we are always seeking our Grandsheikh's support, support that will help us act according to our Lord's commands, and support to help us stand firmly in the face of our enemies: the lower self, Satan, vain desires and worldliness. For both of these goals - progress on the right way and avoiding deviation from it completely - we need his support. Without such a strong support a person will be vanquished.

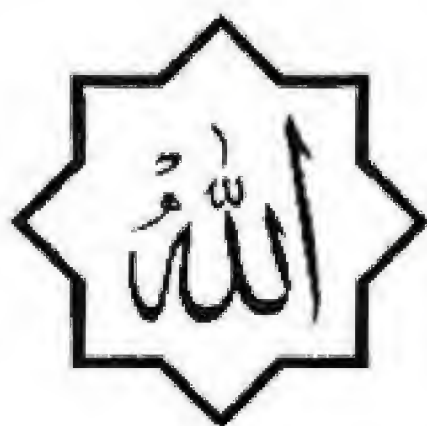
Therefore, we seek our Grandsheikh's support by saying: "Meded Ya Sayyidi", "Support, oh my Master." You must call upon your Grandsheikh in such a manner when you are in need of support, then that support may reach to you. The more you feel yourself to be weak and in need of support, the more support he will extend to you. But the more you depend on your own knowledge and your mind's powers, the less support you will receive, as Grandsheikh will say: "He is self-sufficient, so why lend him support. Leave him in the hands of his ego."

When the Holy Prophet asked his Lord, "Oh my Lord, don't leave me in the hands of my ego even for a moment", he was seeking refuge from two undesirable possibilities: 1) to be left in the hands of his ego's base desires, and 2) to be left alone to guide himself only by his mind and knowledge. In both these ways the ego attempts to separate us from true guidance, and in admitting our weakness and seeking support in the face of the ego's trickery we gain that help.

Just as Divine Guidance and help reached to our Prophet through the Archangel Gabriel who acted as Allah's

representative in carrying His revelation to the Prophets, so that Divine Help reaches to the Saints via the Holy Prophet, who acted as Allah Almighty's representative in bringing guidance to his Nation. And ultimately, after the Prophet's time, that guidance reaches to our hearts through the Saints, his inheritors, as we have not yet developed the senses with which to listen directly to the Prophet's guidance. Some foolish people, even among the Muslims, will undoubtedly deny this, saying that all that remains of the Holy Prophet's guidance is what is written in books. This point of view, far from being the reality, is a blind man's view, for were the Holy Prophet to have taken those powers with him upon his death there would remain no more religion, no more faith, no nothing from Islam. No, that prophetic power never leaves the Earth; it is only transformed and distributed through the awareness of the Holy Prophet's inheritors.

Therefore, you must look for the support of the Saints in a Universe in which you are totally weak. Once you have established a good connection with such a person you will always be in contact with him: a "wire" will carry current to your heart from his power source. That aid will make itself felt most in times of need. Now it is daytime and you don't seek a torch, no need; but at night such a small light will prevent you from falling into a pit.



FABRICATION DESTROYS SINCERITY

I have come here today with empty hands; I have brought with me no prepared lessons or syllabus. I am not a school teacher or a university professor, and it is not my duty to fill up your heads with much information on "Islamic Mysticism". No, our goal is not just to feed you more knowledge, for you are all very knowledgeable people already. Our purpose is another, and it can only be gained through spontaneity: you must feel comfortable in this assembly, for only then can anything of real value be passed to your hearts.

We have been granted permission by our Grand-sheikh to hold such spontaneous meetings for the sake of Allah Almighty, for the purpose of fanning the spark of His Divine Love in all of you. We have no permission to make well-thought-out fabrications to fan the fire of self-worship.

It is for this reason that I could not give you notice far in advance of my coming here. During last year's visit, when Sheikh H. asked me to kindly inform him well in advance of the date, duration, etc. of our visit here, in order to notify all the people who might want to attend, so that they could adjust their schedules accordingly, I had to refuse to give him a date. In explanation of why I could not comply I told him: "I am only a servant of my Lord. I can only move according to His Almighty's Will, not according to my own. He rules over me and determines my movements, not I; therefore, I hope to be with you next year after Ramadan, but more than this I cannot now say."

Now Ramadan is past, and as I had hoped, we are here in the assembly of our beloved brothers and sisters once again. And, as our Grandsheikh used to say: "To be in the presence of loved ones is a great good fortune." We have thus come together even without your having had a firm commitment of my attendance far in advance; and it is in this manner that we may come together any time without appointment.

This is a Divine Feast, and all those present have been invited from pre-eternity when the souls were gathered in the Divine Presence to pledge their eternal worship and loyalty to their Lord. At that time those who were destined to meet in love in this World were gathered near to one another, and it is for this reason that their hearts are drawn together in this world. Whoever is attending has been invited from that day, the Day of Promises, and it is impossible that any of you be late or absent. Now all of us are taking our shares of that Divine Feast.

May those who come here come as sincere seekers. That is our hope and prayer, for sincerity is what every seeker needs in his search, and he must ask his Lord to make him sincere and keep his heart turned towards His Divine Presence with sincerity. He must ask for this, as the Lord never accepts devotion — neither "worship" nor "good actions" — presented insincerely. This must be the main concern of every seeker: to attain to sincerity is the secret of success. When sincere people come together, that meeting has spiritual light. Sincerity is never a partner to fabrication. The atmosphere of a fabricated meeting is not a suitable one for sincerity to dwell in. Thus sincerity flees in the face of fabrication, leaving

hearts cold.

Be as you are. Don't fabricate yourself into something "important". In our time everyone is busy puffing himself up with the result that light is extinguished and evil nurtured. But when sincerity prevails evil flees from our assembly — no way in for the Accursed Devil. That is the power of sincerity. Therefore, I ask my Lord that I may always be with His sincere servants — and He has granted me my request so that we have seen this happy day upon which we are together once again with my Lord's Saints from the German Nation. And I ask my Lord to make me as a mercy to you, not a means of punishment because of my sins. He Almighty has honoured me by making me a servant to all of you; even though I am speaking, I am not your Master but your servant, bringing you spiritual guidance on this spiritual occasion.

I thank my Lord for bestowing upon me such an honour, and I take refuge in Him Almighty. Oh my Lord, don't leave me in the hands of my ego, as my ego always asks to show itself in a false form, to make everyone believe it is what it isn't. Ego is the Expert of Fabrication. As in the university you have "Master of Science", so the ego is the "master of fabrication", always looking for an occasion to show off.

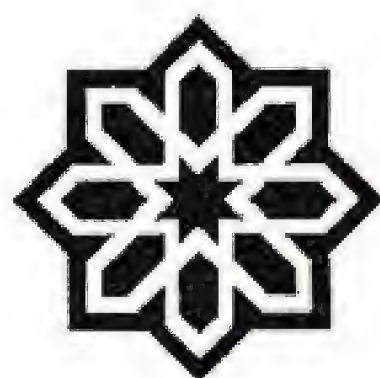
One should always seek refuge in his Lord from the tricks of his ego, as the ego's goal is to deprive us of that open channel to the heart. Who indulges in fabrication cannot give anything from the heart. They may give everything from the tongue or pen, but nothing from the heart, never — their hearts are locked. They are but bags of hot air.

Oh my Lord, don't leave me to fabricate to Your servants.

Please teach me, let Your Prophet and Your Saints teach me, and make me worthy of receiving such noble instruction! Such teaching passes from heart to heart. It is easily understood and effective on people's hearts, as hearts cannot be deceived or cheated. The heart remains closed until it encounters sincerity. No one can ever open his heart to another until he knows that that person is sincere. He may listen to that person's lectures and teachings, but they will never reach into his heart, because his heart is locked.

Therefore, I am asking forgiveness of my Lord if my ego seeks to show itself in this sincere assembly and invent some fabrications. The more you can be sincere with people, the more trust they will have in you when they come to you for help. That is the key to the success of the call of our Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon him, and to that of all the Holy Prophets - sincerity. Only because of their sincerity people believed in them, and were able to make such hard sacrifices for the sake of their trust in that Prophet.

We are living in a time in which we are in most acute need of sincerity. We must destroy fabrications which are products of the Devil. We must endeavour to destroy the sovereignty of devils on this Earth, and the most effective weapon in that struggle is sincerity. Therefore, it is important for all of us to ask for more and more of it from our Lord.



ABOUT PEACE

Question: "We are always praying for peace. How may all the different peoples live together in peace?"

Your question is a very important one, and I thank you for asking it. We have a saying: "The question is half of the knowledge". Asking such important questions indicates an active mental life and sincerity on the part of the questioner. Not all questions can be described as "half of the knowledge", for some questions indicate insincerity and closed-mindedness: the expected answer or desired opinion is built into the question. Such questions are no questions at all, and they come upon us with the weight of a mountain: they narrow the perspective of the discourse. But a sincere question such as this one is the kind we are pleased to be asked and to answer.

We pray for peace, you pray for peace and Christians pray for peace as well. But neither individually nor generally is peace attained - why? For anything to occur in this world the right conditions must exist. Peace is no exception to this rule. For peace to exist certain conditions must be fulfilled, and if they are fulfilled you may attain, firstly, inner peace, and then peace between yourself and those around you. But peace will remain an unattainable ideal as long as the conditions for its attainment are not fulfilled.

For peace to be attained between people a primary condition is that they look to each other with benevolence

and tolerance. Look at these beautiful gardens: one and the same soil and so many hundreds of different kinds of trees and plants! They cannot be seen complaining about the proximity of the other kinds of plants. They are not fanatics insisting that all of the trees in the area should be of one and the same variety.

If you live near to people of a different background or religion and each is respecting the other's rights, then you may live in their neighbourhood without any problems. Our Prophet Muhammad. Peace be upon him, was living next door to a Jew. He never objected, saying: "Take that person out of my neighbourhood and make him stay with his own kind." No. The Holy Prophet's example is the best example for us, and he always stressed the importance of neighbourly relations. In the Holy Qur'an it is specifically mentioned that neighbours be some of the first recipients of help and charity. Therefore, the neighbourhood is an important concept in Islam, and the proximity of different peoples destroys fanaticism. You have been called to be good neighbours.

You have your religion, way of life and ideas, and he has his. Leave him to his Lord in those matters in which you differ, but by all means keep your respect for your neighbour and give your best to him. That is your duty, and if you do your duty you may expect your neighbour to show goodness to you. Don't look after his faults or cause enmity by attacking his beliefs. Leave your Lord, the Judge of Judges, to judge, and fanaticism will die.

Now I am sitting with you. If I look to you (and to all) as my Lord's creatures, as unique and perfect fruits of my Lord's

excellent creation, seeing you as one would look at a rose or a fruitful tree, then I am sitting in a paradise garden, and from everyone comes to my heart inner peace. If we can look to each other in such a manner we will attain not only acceptance and tolerance, but familiarity and appreciation, and, ultimately love and peace.

But because people are not regarding each other as their Lord's unique and beloved creatures, people cannot even tolerate each other, what to speak of appreciating them or seeking to be more familiar with them: "This world is not big enough to hold both of us," say individuals to each other, and nations to each other. Each one puffs itself up so large as to crowd out all others from existence. And this attitude makes people so heavy as well, that the Earth can hardly carry mankind anymore, not because of their numbers but because of their attitudes and behaviour.

We are preventing ourselves from appreciating others and seeking their familiarity. We see them not as our Lord's favoured deputies on Earth but as threats to ourselves. And they, in turn, see us as dangerous, and withhold their familiarity from us. Therefore, wildness is the attribute growing up most rapidly in people, and from this wild nature comes frigidity and enmity between people.

Our lower selves build walls around us — impenetrable walls. Break down those walls so that you may learn to appreciate others and approach them. You will then find that good feelings overflow from your heart and that most people start to show a better attitude towards you. But when you are quarrelsome and controlled by your ugly, greedy lower self,

no one can reach you and you can reach out to no one except with harm. It is reciprocal. Therefore, the first thing to work upon is yourself, getting that lower self under control, so that you may give familiarity to people.

One of the great Saints of the Sufi Way used to ride around in the desert on the back of a tiger and use a snake as a whip. How is such a thing possible? What is the secret? Allah Almighty gives feeling and perception to every creature. If you can open up and give familiarity even to a huge tiger, it can be tamed and you can use it as a riding beast. And that is only a beast, so what about the Descendants of Adam, who have been given so much potential by their Lord that He has called them the "Crown of Creation" and His deputies on Earth? You must gain familiarity with them so as to tame them.

And in the face of so much evil and wildness in the world we must not despair and say: "What kind of God is it who has made such horrible, evil people who harm others and cause mass violence and world wars?" With magnanimity we must try to tame the wild. Don't say that there is no Divine Wisdom in the creation of tigers and snakes (and people who resemble them in their actions)! Say that He Almighty created tigers to ride upon and snakes to be used as riding whips!

Once upon a time there was a man who was plagued by cockroaches. Everywhere he went he encountered the unpleasant dirty creatures. And no matter what he did he could not rid himself of them. He even moved several times within his home town hoping that the new habitation would not become cockroach-infested, but it always did. Finally he grew so desperate that he even migrated to another

country where there were less cockroaches, and settled there.

Eventually this man developed a very bad abscess on his leg. He went to many doctors, but all the medicine they prescribed just made the abscess worse and irritated it more. So finally he gave up trying to treat it. One day he was sitting in front of his house with his leg up, moaning and groaning: "Ah, eeh, oh, ooh!" when along came a travelling dervish. The dervish asked him: "Why are you sitting there saying 'Ah, eeh, oh, ooh'?" He replied: "I have a terrible abscess on my leg and no matter what I do, it won't heal; in fact it just gets worse each time I seek treatment." The dervish said: "Oh, it is the easiest thing in the world to treat. Have you ever seen a cockroach?" "Cockroach! The curse of my life! In my home country there were so many that they drove me to the brink of madness. That is why I came to live in this land, just to escape the cockroaches." The dervish said: "You must catch a lot of them, kill them, burn them, then take the ashes and apply them to your wound; then, God willing, it will be healed quickly." The man followed the advice of that dervish, hunting cockroaches in that land and finding them only with great difficulty, and presently his abscess was healed. After that he never again cursed the existence of cockroaches.

And what about the most highly honoured Descendants of Adam, whom Allah has made His deputies on Earth? Don't hate them because of their bad actions, but remind yourself that they are your Lord's beloved creatures; and try to be magnanimous, as the Holy Qur'an exhorts:

"Counter harm with goodness and behold, the one who is now your enemy will become as a close

friend. And no one can attain this except the patient, and no one can attain this except those endowed with great good fortune."

Look, as I mentioned before, the Holy Prophet used to live next to a Jew in Medina. The Prophet tolerated his presence even though that person used to throw his garbage in front of the Prophet's house every day as a sign of contempt for him. One day the Holy Prophet, Peace be upon him, noticed that there was no garbage in front of his house. On the following day as well no garbage could be seen. He then inquired about the well-being of that neighbour and discovered that he was ill.

Then the Holy Prophet made the intention to visit him, to make a sick call. That Jewish man was astounded to see the Prophet at his doorstep, and inquired: "How did you know that I was ill?" He replied: "I noticed that your daily gift was not in front of my house as usual, so I thought that something might be wrong with you. Therefore, I inquired and was told that you were ill."

But far from showing such goodness to members of other communities, people nowadays can have no appreciation, nor share any familiarity even with the members of their own families. Wives cannot appreciate the good qualities of their husbands, and vice versa. Families may live under one roof, but there is no feeling of home or family. People have become strangers to their closest relatives, each one being wrapped up in the world of his ego's desires, and no one figures into that world except himself, unless it be for selfish exploitation.

If no familiarity can be found in families, then what about

the community at large? It is impossible. So to speak about worldwide peace is even more futile, for familiarity, love and peace must be established in the individual, then in the family and so on, from the smallest unit upwards, not the opposite.

We pray for a peaceful world, for all the burning fires to be extinguished, from East to West. But the walls of alienation have become so formidable that no nation can even consider real closeness or cooperation with another. Familiarity is imprisoned and wildness and alienation are spreading day by day so quickly that unless that current can be stemmed soon, it will sweep away the whole world. That wildness current is gushing forth, and no dams that we may erect can contain it, as man only reaps what he sows. Man is sowing wildness, and so he must reap wildness, not familiarity and friendship. This current has swept over every level of human interaction; it has covered the Earth. What should be the result? According to tradition mankind will eat itself up in a spree of violence until Divine Intervention calls a halt to that raging fire.

* * * * *

Question: "What about the people who are marching and demonstrating for peace — carrying banners and chanting — are they furthering the cause of peace or hindering it?"

If those people are at peace with themselves, in their inner lives, then their efforts may be of benefit, but if they are as yet wild and violent in themselves, what should be the result of their activities? More enmity and wildness will gush forth, that is all.

Now peace is being characterized in the newspapers as a dove, but there are so many eagles waiting to snatch it. If there is no provision for protecting that dove, peace is only a meaningless word. Now a large group of ladies are marching from Scotland to London for peace, masha'Allah! So many ladies bringing peace from Scotland! Such demonstrations are only something for people to laugh and scoff at, nothing more; for this matter needs Divine Support.

Peace must be supported, and to support peace one needs power: no power, no peace. And the most powerful support for peace is an awakened inner life: the familiarity that grows in our hearts and spreads its boughs over the whole world. Without such a fertile and fruitbearing heart, what is the meaning of a "peace march"? That is only child's-play, who can take it seriously?



WHY THE WORLD IS ALWAYS DIVIDED BETWEEN "US" AND "THEM"

Question: "Sheikh Efendi, why is the world always divided between "us" and "them"? Why is there constant conflict between nations and religions? You said yesterday that appreciation and familiarity are the way to peace, but if we only share familiarity with those on our own side, does that familiarity not simply feed enmity towards those who fall outside that familiar group? Why is it always this way, and is it possible to do anything about it?"

This is a very important question, and our guest should be acquainted with the context of the answer, as it is dealt with in all Holy Scriptures, not only in the Holy Qur'an.

First of all we must clarify one thing: that the true answer to this question can only be found in traditional sources. The answer is an unchangeable reality, and we discover it in those sources that come down to us over the centuries. His question is about a topic that is impossible for us to encompass with our own knowledge. The Almighty Creator has created countless creatures on Earth and in other realms of existence. He is the Creator; when it comes to understanding the creation our knowledge is always limited, as we were not present at the beginning of this world or at the creation of its creatures.

All the explanations that scientists have come up with on these matters are mere theories; they have no real knowledge

on these subjects and no power to grasp such knowledge, as that authority has not been given them. Their affair is only one of speculation.

Our knowledge, on the other hand, is not speculative, not guesswork of the mind in a realm beyond the mind's reach. Our sources are the two kinds of traditional knowledge that reach down to our time. The first is the authority of Scripture, and the other is something that passes from heart to heart over the centuries. Nowadays both these traditional sources are under attack by those who rely for their knowledge solely on observation and experimentation. Questions like the one we are discussing however, fall outside of this realm.

Now we will look back to the beginning of mankind on Earth as it is described in traditions. The Lord of Adam and his Descendants, the Lord of Angels, the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, before creating the first man, Adam, declared to His Angels: "I am going to create a new kind of creature and make him My deputy on Earth." Yes, it is written in all Holy Books, all are in agreement.

That rank, the rank of Allah's deputy on Earth, the rank known as the "Crown of Creation", is the highest possible station for created beings. Who occupies that station carries great authority in his hands, and great power; power even to act on behalf of the Lord of the Worlds. Who can imagine a greater honour than this for any creature? What creature is not going to ask for that honour to be bestowed upon him, particularly the Angels who were created in such beautiful forms for the sole purpose of glorifying and praising their

Lord with all manners of praise and in all postures of devotion?

When Allah Almighty informed them that He was going to create a new creature to be His deputy, and to dress him in the robe of His Own Attributes and Characteristics, the Angels were disappointed, for they had been sure that that honour would be bestowed upon them. Not only disappointment was their feeling but the utmost bewilderment, as, with the light of their Angelic vision, they were given the privilege of regarding the Preserved Table upon which the characteristics and actions of that still uncreated creature could be discerned. Naturally the Angels were horrified with what they saw, and they said:

“Oh our Lord, is it really Your intention to place upon the Earth a creature such as this one who will do evil upon it and shed blood, while we, who are glorifying You with endless praises and sanctifying your Holy Name (are ready to take that position)?”

Now the Angels were not worthy of receiving that honour, and from this statement that becomes clear. For shall anyone teach or correct the Lord? Does He Almighty not know what He is doing, that you need to confront Him about any of His decrees? Therefore, the Angels are servants of Mankind, and not vice versa, despite the fact that we are such an evil race, shedding the blood of our innocent fellow human beings.

The Angels could perceive our evil nature even at that time — before our creation — and they remonstrated, but the All-Knowing Creator replied: “I know, and My knowledge is absolute. I know all about the Descendants of Adam: that

which you know about them as well as what you can't know. I know, also, what you say and what you mean to say, what you declare and what you hide in your, innermost being. I know, also, that your objections are not just what you declare but that there is more behind that (i.e. your jealousy) which you dare not voice. Yes, and despite the fact that they will be so evil and shed blood, I am giving them that honour, making them My deputies on Earth."

This account is related in all Holy Books, and we believe in what the Lord has revealed to us. Not only do we believe, but it is plain to see that this is a reality: The Descendants of Adam rule the Earth above all other creatures, and the Lord Almighty has given them from His Own Divine Attributes. That share of the Lord's Attributes that has been bestowed upon the Descendants of Adam is the source of their honour that sets them apart from all the Creation.

One of the Most prominent Attributes of Allah Almighty is His Uniqueness. He is the One and Only God with no god beside Him. Therefore, Uniqueness is a very basic and important Attribute of our Lord Almighty, so much so that, if recognition of this attribute is lost in any religion or in the worship of any individual worshipper, that worship becomes unacceptable to the Lord. To lose sight of His Uniqueness is one of the greatest sins.

He Almighty bestowed on His deputies, also, a share of this attribute, therefore, everyone likes to be unique. Because of this there must always be conflict between people; from this attribute grow all our bad actions.

I shall tell you one tale about our ancestor Adam. When

Allah Almighty caused Adam and Eve to descend from Paradise to earthly existence, He caused them also to be separated. Adam found himself on Mount Serendip in Ceylon and Eve in Jeddah, Arabia. Then they began to run back and forth in search of each other. There were no other human beings on Earth, so you can imagine Adam's surprise when he saw what appeared to be a man like himself (but who was in reality the Angel Gabriel sent down in the shape of a man in order to check up on Adam).

Adam approached Gabriel, inquiring: "Who are you? And what are you doing here?" Gabriel replied: "I am a man like you and I am living on this Earth." Adam, very displeased, said: "What shall we do now? If you are now also here we must establish a border so that you will have your territory and I mine. You shall not trespass onto my side, neither will I onto yours." So they began erecting a border with boulders, and when they had thus demarcated the boundary they went their separate ways.

But no sooner had Adam departed when Gabriel came back and moved the boulders in order to make his territory larger. The next day Adam came in order to make a border patrol. When he noticed that the border had been changed he rushed on Gabriel and grabbed him, demanding: "Why have you moved the boundary markers?" Gabriel replied: The previous border was wrong. We had mis-measured. When I checked the survey again I discovered the mistake and made the correction."

Then Adam lost his temper and they began to fight. But Gabriel is an Angel with angelic power, so naturally he

overcame Adam. But Adam was very clever, and even when he was pinned down by Gabriel he kicked one of the marker-rocks with his foot, moving it towards its original position.

Such is the character of mankind, planted in the very "yeast" of our being, in our very nature. Therefore, it is impossible for anyone to change human behaviour totally, and our Lord knows very well what characteristics He has planted in His creatures, and the wisdom in planting them. He never accepts any rejection of His honoured deputies, though they may be ever quarrelsome.

So many millions of people all are living on the face of one and the same World, and each one has in himself the need to be unique, to feel himself singular. And so, the kind of disputes as the one in our tale of Adam will always break out, as we are his heirs and the heirs of his attributes. He couldn't get along with even one other man on Earth, so what about billions?

By giving the descendants of Adam this attribute Allah Almighty has exposed us to a great trial indeed. Because of men's attributes and also the inherent sufferings built into a temporary existence, the world can be termed a "House of Affliction", a cursed place, with suffering overcoming us from every side. And the inhabitants of the heavens (i.e. Angels) wonder at our ability to do any good at all with such a nature and in such a world; they have marvelled at our patience under such conditions. By being patient with the circumstances of our inner being and the circumstances that surround us, we have an opportunity of gaining high stations in the Divine Presence, and endless favours from our Lord.

Because of this God-given nature, it is impossible for anyone to do away with disagreements between people in this world. The duty of the Prophets has been to awaken people to the life of the hereafter, to remind them that this world is only a testing ground, and to train them to live in it in such a way that will bring them eternal felicity. The Prophets give people the weapons needed to fight their own bad characteristics and the evils of this world so that they may attain their eternal goals. They advised people: "Oh People, don't fight over this world! It is a temporary life and of no real lasting value — it doesn't matter whether you accumulate wealth in it or not, for you will leave it with empty hands, and all that will benefit you from it is your self-control while in it and obedience to your Lord's orders. So be patient and turn your gaze to eternity."

But so many people turn deaf ears to the advice of the Prophets and refuse to train their egos, which in the manner that is natural for them since they are the essence of selfishness — carry those people into conflict and wildness.

It is within the possibility of individuals to choose either of these two ways: to undergo the training of the Prophets and to learn to discipline themselves so that they may live in peace, or to follow the way of devils and try to gain selfish pleasure at all costs. Anytime that trained people may be in power and establish their kingdom, there will be relative peace on Earth. But at any time that devils establish their kingdom, fighting and struggle continues and grows. There is no third force: at all times one may encounter sympathetic people trained in the ways of the Prophets and also merciless

“wildlife people” following the teachings of Satan.

Without a doubt the time we are living in is the age of the sovereignty of devils: from East to West, from North to South, and at the present time, until Divine intervention reaches to us, we can do nothing about it. It is a time in which people of good will find themselves caught up unwillingly in the conflicts ordered by devils, and, as those devils are the sovereigns of our time, Evil Oceans have covered the Earth, leaving mankind struggling in them trying to keep itself from drowning.

Our only responsibility as members of society, (beyond what we do in the way of keeping goodness alive in ourselves and in our contacts with those around us) is to be seeking to pledge our allegiance to a righteous sovereign, should one appear. It is written in the Qur'an and in the Bible that once, when the Children of Israel were suffering under the oppression of tyrants, they pleaded with their Prophet (Samuel) to ask the Lord to send them one of His sincere servants, supported by Divine Power, to establish the kingdom of righteousness on Earth and to destroy the sovereignty of devils.

In this we find a good example for believers in all times, for the Lord says: “Oh people, Oh My servants, when you are oppressed by tyrants cry out to Me and ask Me to take the load of their cruelty from your shoulders. Ask Me to sweep away the sovereignty of devils and establish the heavenly kingdom on Earth.” Nowadays Christians, Jews and Muslims alike are all suffering under the rule of devils, whether those devils claim to be believers or openly deny faith. It is the duty

of all sincere people from all Nations to ask: "Oh our Lord, send us one of Your empowered servants to help us do as You have ordered us." Let all men of good will pray in such a manner.



Sheikh Nazim Al-Qubrusi
(May Allah Sanctify his Blessed Soul)!

WHEN TRAGEDY COMES INTO OUR LIVES, HOW CAN WE KEEP OUR FAITH IN GOD'S MERCY?

Question: "Sheikh Efendi, when we behold the glory of the rising sun and the endless sky full of stars, we feel and know thereby that the Creator is and that He is very Great. But sometimes in the life of a person there occur very sad and terrible events: people whom we love die - parents, brothers, friends. When tragedy comes into our lives, how can we keep our faith in God's Mercy, how can we feel that He cares about what is happening to each and every one of us?"

Now our distinguished guest has asked a very important question that every single person in the world must be asking is his heart.

His eyes have been opened to the Infinite Glory of the Creator by the wonders He Almighty has created for that purpose. Therefore, he is praising the Creator and is saying that these wondrous signs in the cosmos and the perfection and harmony of the intricate movements of heavenly bodies, of the balance of nature etc. may cause a person to awaken to the Majesty of the Creator, Sustainer and Guide of All Creation.

He recognizes, as do all believers, that the Lord's Endless Mercy pervades the Universe, for without it neither we nor any other creature could exist and take its sustenance. He sees that we are swimming in Allah's Mercy Oceans. But he asks, as do so many people, how to reconcile our belief in Allah's

Mercy with the bitterness and horror we feel at the death of loved ones and other seemingly merciless events in the world. He is asking how we can deal with the doubts that creep into our minds in respect to that mercy, how to deal with that voice that says to us: "If Allah is so merciful, how can He allow such events to happen?"

Yesterday we spoke of the creation of Adam, and we said that, according to tradition, the Descendants of Adam have been granted the most honourable station possible among creatures of this world: the rank of deputies of their Creator.

Every creature may ask to be in possession of such a high rank, but Allah Almighty cautioned them all, asking: "Who among you is prepared to pay the price and carry the burden of that most honoured rank? Who can carry that heaviest of ranks on their shoulders?" Yes, all creation was shown the nature of that rank, and its responsibilities. As Allah Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an:

"Verily, We offered that trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains; and they refused to accept it, and they feared it. But man, he took it upon himself to bear it. Surely he was sinful, very foolish."

And He Almighty revealed to creation all that was involved in that trust, so that no creature could plead that he had been burdened beyond what he himself had accepted. The result was, that when faced with such a choice, all of creation refused to take it upon themselves, saying that they could not trust themselves with such a task under such circumstances; saying that they were afraid in the face of such an awesome challenge. But man said: "I can

carry it. I am ready to make the necessary sacrifices, I am ready to pay the price."

Here, then, is your answer. If you lay claim to that honour, if you value the nobility of your rank as "Crown of creation", if you consider that which sets you apart from dogs and monkeys to be worth preserving, worth sacrificing for, then you must be prepared to agree with your Lord's decrees; that is the price you pay for that most honourable rank. You must not reject what He wills in directing the course of life in His Creation. He does as He wills, and it is for us to be patient in matters that are beyond our sphere of influence (like the inevitability of death), for the sake of our Lord's love, as He has given His love to the Descendants of Adam above all creatures.

Look, our Lord asked the Prophet Abraham, Peace be upon him, to slaughter his son for the love of his Lord. In this story is a lesson for all of us. He Almighty ordered Abraham: "Slaughter your son for Me. The price of My Love is even more than the sacrifice of that love you harbour for your son. Give that love (which is now for your son) to Me also: by slaughtering him give it to Me."

Then Abraham made ready to obey his Lord, despite Satan's repeated attempts to dissuade him. Thus (by proving his readiness to carry out the Lord's order) Abraham proved his steadfastness in obeying the divine command. But the Lord, who is not in need of the blood of our sacrifices, but accepts the sincerity with which they are offered, prevented the knife from cutting. He Almighty ordered the knife: "Don't cut!" Then Abraham tried to cut

his son's throat, but the knife wouldn't cut, would not even make a scratch, though he had sharpened it himself with the greatest care. Repeatedly he drew the knife across the delicate throat of his son, but with no result. At last Abraham threw down the knife, and in order to show Abraham the Power of His Will, He Almighty made that knife cut through a big rock like a knife cuts through cheese. Then an Angel appeared to the astonished Abraham, saying: "Oh Abraham, don't think that your knife is dull! You have proved your sincerity, now take this ram and slaughter it..."

He Almighty has given His Divine Love to the Descendants of Adam, and we have responded to our Lord, saying: "We are true unto You, oh our Lord." Then He Almighty said: "I am going to try you, to examine all of you to see who is true in his claim of loving Me." Who can withstand such a trial as Abraham's? But in all of our lives there are also trials, and by being patient in the face of them may we gain our Lord's endless love.

One of the most famous of Islam's Saints was the King of the land of Balkh, Ibrahim bin Adham. He abandoned his kingship for his Lord's sake and went away to live on what he earned by performing tasks of menial labour, and devoted his spare time, and all his heart, to his Lord's worship.

When he abdicated his throne and went away he left behind him a pregnant wife. After twelve years the boy his wife had borne began to inquire after his father. The boy set out in search of his father, and successfully traced his movements until he finally came across him in Mecca.

Ibrahim bin Adham knew that the boy was his son the very first time he layed eyes upon his noble face. He said: "You are my son." The boy said: "You are my father." Then Ibrahim prayed to his Lord: "Oh my Lord, You know best that, up until now, all of my love has been exclusively for You. Now I see that some of my love is going to this boy. Oh my Lord, all I want in this life is that my heart be purely for You; therefore, I implore You to please transform this love in my heart for the boy to love for You."

Then Allah Almighty took the soul of that boy to His Divine Presence. The love that the boy had had for his father was transformed into Divine Love so that he went to the Divine Presence totally pure; and the love that Ibrahim bin Adham had for the boy also penetrated to the realm of Divine Love, merged into the Divine Love Oceans of his saintly heart.

Allah Almighty is "Al-Ghayyur" or "The Jealous God". He calls us to merge all the love we feel into His Divine Love; to take the love we feel for our loved ones and transform it into a love that will penetrate into the realm of Divine Love. This is the meaning of His requiring a "pure heart" (qalbun-salim) from His servants, for all that you love in those dear ones is but the attraction of a ray of the attributes of your Lord which you see in them, which shines through the familiarity between you and them and reaches your heart.

Those loved ones will die, and so will you; but if that love reaches to the ultimate recipient of all love, then the goal of human love has been attained, and it is acceptable and lovely in the Divine Presence. But if we fail to surrender to our

Lord's decree of mortality for all His creatures, and hate Him for putting us in a temporary existence of passing images, states and feelings, life becomes a pill too bitter to swallow. In such a case life itself becomes a sorrow ocean, as He Almighty calls all of His servants, one by one, back to His Divine Presence an awy from us and this world.

He is our Lord, the sole Sustainer of our existence. He has rights over us and tries us to see who will be true and hold to the love of their Lord. Therefore, all manner of events may occur: lovely people may die, young people may die, brothers, parents, wives and husbands may die, will die, must die. Everyone you love will die. Then He looks to see what you will do: Can you transform your love and make tragedy a cause of increasing your love for your Lord? So few people understand this, and that is why they can't see the Divine Wisdom in sorrowful events. They don't recognize that our Lord is beckoning us to love Him wholly and exclusively; therefore they suffer.

Everything He Almighty has given to the Descendants of Adam is temporary, not worthy of that ultimate love. You must give your love to the One who is always in existence — from pre-eternity to post-eternity.

“Glorified is the Ever - Living (Lord), for whom there is no Death”

Therefore, you must awaken to these realities and not ever think that events represent the decrees of a merciless Lord. No! For in these apparently merciless events is contained boundless mercy, as our Lord rewards us in accordance with the severity of our trials: the recompense is more and more of

His Love. At any time sorrowful and unliked events may (and will) descend upon you. Your Lord makes them a means of approach to Him, that He may pour out everlasting Love Oceans on His beloved servants.

This is a very important point, and a very heavy one. We must comprehend these wisdoms and their import, but such realization will evade us as long as we are thinking that these are just some words. That Divine Love must be tasted. As much as I may repeat the words: "Honey, honey, honey..." or describe the characteristics and flavour of honey, you are not going to taste it, not going to be satisfied. These realities must be tasted, and unless you have reached that point you cannot understand more than these words.



Sheikh Bahauddin Adil

A TRUE DREAM IS ONE-FORTIETH OF PROPHECY

True dreams open up ways for people to approach to heavenly spheres and heavenly beings. The Holy Prophet said that a true spiritual dream is one-fortieth of prophethood. Therefore, extraordinary dreams may indicate an inner awakening, and may aid in establishing knowledge of reality.

When a person sleeps, his physical processes are maintained at a low level, but one continues to experience through dreams — which are the result of strange and extraordinary powers working on us. In dreams we may see ourselves coming and going, doing and making so many things, sometimes very strange things. When a dreamed-of event actually occurs in real life, explains hidden aspects of events or involves visions of Saints or Prophets, that dream indicates a beginning for that individual's relation to heaven, an awakening of that person's spiritual life.

Prophethood itself started with such dreams, as the Holy Books are full of accounts of youths and children who were destined to become Prophets and saw extraordinary dreams in their youth before the full realities of Prophethood were revealed to them. The next level after seeing dreams, is the seeing of visions while in a waking state: being visited by Allah's hidden servants and learning inner knowledge from them.

That is the beginning of prophecy, the signs of that special awakening that has occurred from the earliest history

of mankind. Now billions of people follow those Holy Prophets, and for true believers in the Prophets the message they brought is of utmost importance in trying to understand man's position in this life. When they were sent they came with so many signs, and their truthfulness and wisdom is beyond question. Therefore, as people have no way to refute them, no evidence upon which to base a rejection, we should follow them and pay heed to their instructions and prophecies.

To deny the truthfulness of Prophets despite the signs they brought, and despite their indisputably honest character is a sin and a foolishness. "Positive Knowledge" has no basis upon which to base a rejection of the Prophets, and the most they can do is to say, "maybe or maybe not". Some scientists however, who are more broadminded and perceptive than the average modern scientist, through the use of their minds have come to the door of prophecy, have come face to face with the proof of its existence. But through their mind-productions they can never touch upon, what to speak of penetrating, the secrets of prophecy.

To understand the secrets of prophecy one must have been given prophecy. Men can never fully grasp a woman's situation, because they have never been women, and neither can a woman fully understand how a man feels. A child doesn't understand an adult's feelings until he grows up. Only the Angels can fully understand the meaning of "Angelic". Only Prophets can understand prophethood and only Saints saint-hood.

And so, man can only come to the door of prophethood

and be in a position to confirm its existence, but he can never describe it accurately or understand it until he stops wracking his brain in the attempt — until he realizes that the mind and its productions are woefully inadequate means for understanding that reality. To taste the reality of prophecy he must leave aside his own “mind-productions” and follow prophecy. Then, and only then, he may take a “graft” of prophethood. This tree may be wild, but bring some bark from another tree and, though the tree may still be wild, it will take on some of the characteristics of that other tree.

The Holy Prophets have the same power of imparting their attributes to sincere and capable followers. They may cut away some bark from that person's ego and graft prophetic attributes onto him, so that lights of prophecy may also make themselves apparent in the personality of that individual. Though still not a Prophet, he may then look, see, hear and know in a way that normal people cannot. Such an exalted station is held in store for the true followers of the Prophets. Who are those true followers? He who leaves his ego and goes after that Prophet with all his soul is a true follower; it is he who may receive that graft of prophetic realities which is called Sainthood.

Once Abdullah ibn Umar (A son of the Khalipha Umar) was travelling with some of his companions on camel. Suddenly, as they were passing a certain place, he made his camel deviate from the path and after a short distance he made it return to the path. His fellow travellers asked him: “Oh our master, why did you turn off the path in that place and then come back?” He replied: “Oh my sons and brothers,

as I passed that point I perceived that the Holy Prophet, Peace be upon him, deviated from the track in that same place and then returned to it at the place you saw me return. So I wanted to do everything the way he did and follow him every step of the way.”

Those Saints who have been given light from the lights of the Prophet may perceive where the Holy Prophet stepped and where he stood — for in those places they can behold a light. Such lights may be seen by the Saints in different places in Medina where the Holy Prophet often stopped or sat. Such sincere followers are given “grafts” of miraculous powers, they are the Holy Prophet’s true inheritors. Religious scholars are the inheritors of letters, of words and sayings, but the Awliya, the Saints are inheritors of the Prophet’s realities, his actions and his attributes. Because of their true following they have been granted a kind of miraculous power called “Karamah”, which are miracles of a lesser scope but of the same essence as those given to Prophets, and they receive this power through the power of the Holy Prophet Peace be upon him.

Yes, this lecture is important; it clarifies for us that there is something else beyond our minds, that there are always some extraordinary beings living among mankind, and that you yourself can approach heavenly stations if you can follow your Prophet with complete abandon. If you can perfect such a surrender you may come to understand exactly what mankind's position on this planet is. The Holy Prophet understood this better than anyone else and spoke openly about it in his prophecies. Now we can find those prophecies

recorded in Islamic books, but not everyone who reads those prophecies can understand their realities.

Once the Holy Prophet, Peace be upon him, asked one of his companions: "Oh Abdullah, in what condition have you awakened this morning?" He replied: "Indeed I have awakened this morning in a state of real faith and certainty. I have seen Paradise and Hell and the narrow bridge across Hell on Resurrection Day and I saw the revelation of our Lord's Holy Presence and the multitudes assembled there." Thus a true believer and complete follower can witness something of the truths beheld by Prophets and rent the veils that cover the eyes of the common people. But as long as you are imprisoned by your mind's productions you will never witness the truth. The way to approach that unveiling is to follow the Way of the Prophets in righteousness and sincerity. In particular, for us living in this time that means following the way of the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, Peace be upon him, and his inheritors, the Awliya.



HEART MEDICINE

Question: "What medicine do you prescribe for heartaches?"

Each and every human being has two hearts. One is a physical lump of flesh the size of a fist and the other is the spiritual heart of immeasurable size and depth, more immense than the Universe. If you are asking about aches in the physical heart, the remembrance of Allah is one good medicine, as it imparts unto our bodies strength and regularity and helps the bodily systems that effect the heart to maintain better equilibrium.

If your question pertains to the spiritual heart, the heart that encompasses the whole universe, the remembrance of Allah is the medicine and nourishment of that heart as well. But to even become aware of the existence and functions of that heart, certain teachings must be absorbed and certain practices maintained, for these teachings and practices are what can make our remembrance effective. For both of man's hearts remembrance, "dhikr", is the elixir that can remove the strain of the burden of our heavy responsibility.

There are five stations of the spiritual heart. These stations are virtually unattainable to people because they never place a guard at the first station, and thus Satan is free to enter it at will and to make his mischievous, evil proclamations. When we let him enter he immediately starts to discourage us from our spiritual endeavours by announcing that, in reality, there is no "train", no "spiritual station", no "destination". He claims, indeed, that even this

first station is no station at all but only a place where we are wasting our time waiting to go somewhere when in fact there is nowhere to go. By making such false proclamations he hopes to influence us to abandon the hope of attaining spiritual enlightenment — to leave even that first station and occupy ourselves as his servants in his realm. If we heed his tricky words and abandon our journey he will keep us in constant misery and distress, like prisoners in a very tiny cell. But if you post a guard at the first station of your heart to prevent Satan and his soldiers from entering, you will be safe from the invasion of bad thoughts and evil intentions that would pull you down into endless trouble.

Who is that “guard”? That “guard” is “dhikr”, the remembrance of Allah. Who remembers his Lord has a Divine Light in his heart that prevents Satan and his soldiers from entering. Therefore, the more you are able to remember and to meditate, keeping a close observer’s eye on your heart, the more successful you will be in keeping out your mortal enemy. But should you fail to remember, should you be too occupied to keep an eye on your heart, then certainly Satan will sneak in, at a moment’s heedlessness, and begin to make you suffer.

What is it that keeps us from meditation and self-observation? When we dwell on the desires of our lower selves we become preoccupied and distracted from our vigilance. Thus with our own desires Satan accomplishes his break-in; our own desires are his best decoy. But how can we escape from the preoccupation with our ego’s desires, when those desires are such an intrinsic part of our being? You must know

that the ego's desires are of two kinds: legitimate and illegitimate. The physical being is attracted to food, drink and sexual life. You cannot prevent yourself from desiring those things as long as you are alive, for we are human beings and not angels. We must understand that Allah Almighty grants us from all of those things that we desire only as much as is good for us, just as much as will make us better able to concentrate on our 'guard duty'.

The best guard is neither the starving man nor the overfed glutton, for the starving man will leave his post in search of food, and the overfed glutton will fall asleep at his post. Thus, if a person does not permit himself even the legitimate fulfillment of physical needs, especially sex, the lower self will rebel violently and attack him with a gigantic and frenzied explosion which forces him to fulfill his needs immediately, regardless of whether that fulfillment is legitimate or not. The result of such abstemiousness will be wantonness and nothing else; it will lead that person to lose sight completely of the distinction between permitted and prohibited actions.

For this reason our Grandsheikhs order every murid to grant their ego its legitimate rights and to listen to some of its demands: that they eat and drink of good, wholesome, and tasteful permitted food and marry in accordance with Divine injunction. If you deny* yourselves these permitted pleasures you are inviting "heart disease", and you will suffer from many blows, sometimes to the heart, to the head, the stomach, or the sexual organs, etc.

Therefore, it is imperative for murids to protect themselves from the attack of the lower self before it goes

wild and no longer listens to anyone or anything, and becomes like a starving person who gobbles down any dirty thing resembling food that may fall into his hands — and be it dog food; or like a thirsty person who rushes on water and drinks and drinks until he is ill; or like a person deprived of sex whose will finally breaks and who may fall into debauchery, perversion or brutality to satisfy his needs.

In order to prevent such excesses, new Muslims should make the intention to marry. It is not good for a Muslim to remain single, especially for followers of the Most Distinguished Naqshbandi Order. To be unmarried quickly cuts our hearts off from satisfaction, as suppressed sexual desire is the biggest troublemaker of the heart, robbing it of peace and contentment. When the mind dwells on sexual thoughts Divine Lights are extinguished and a shroud of darkness is cast over our hearts; quickly happiness flees; contentment is killed by the mad onslaught of physical preoccupation. That is the worst disease of our hearts, and you must have a Guide to teach you how to prevent such an onslaught. A person in distress from heartaches must seek a Guide with the same urgency that a heart-attack victim calls for a doctor.

How may one know whom to follow? How can one tell which Guide may lead him successfully? The right Guide is the master of the art of diagnosis and treatment; the one who neither prescribes amputation in case of a scratch, nor a band-aid for a cancer. He is the merciful and sympathetic healer of hearts who doesn't put his patient through unnecessary pain and discomfort, who will always choose the less traumatic of two suitable treatments. A true Guide

cannot be the type of person who loads great burdens on the backs of his followers, except those who have been trained to carry such burdens with ease.

Look, everything in the Universe has been created in measure. We have been ordered to establish that ordained measure in all things and be neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and He Almighty is the ultimate Judge of what that proper measure is. For example, were Allah Almighty to order us to worship Him only once a day, and if we kept up that practice consistently, our obedience would be acceptable. But were you ordered to pray fifty times a day and kept only forty-nine prayers consistently, it would mean that you were courting your Lord's displeasure. Allah Almighty knows very well which of His orders are easy and which are difficult for each and every one of His servants. He may order easily-kept commands and see how His servant tries to obey Him, then He may order something more difficult for the ego to bear, that we may earn His greater pleasure through exertion of a greater effort.

We ask our Lord to show us the easiest way to success for our brothers and sisters, to show us a way of life free of "heart disease", trouble and suffering; to show us the way of satisfaction, rest, light and happiness. It is clear to us that heartaches come to us through our egos' desires and our inability to deal with those desires properly, either denying our egos their rightful demands or giving them more than is good for them. Therefore, our unmarried brothers and sisters should intend to marry in the near future if a suitable opportunity presents itself. When a person marries, and if the marriage is successful, 99% of all heartaches will disappear.

MAINTAINING PEACE IN MARRIAGE

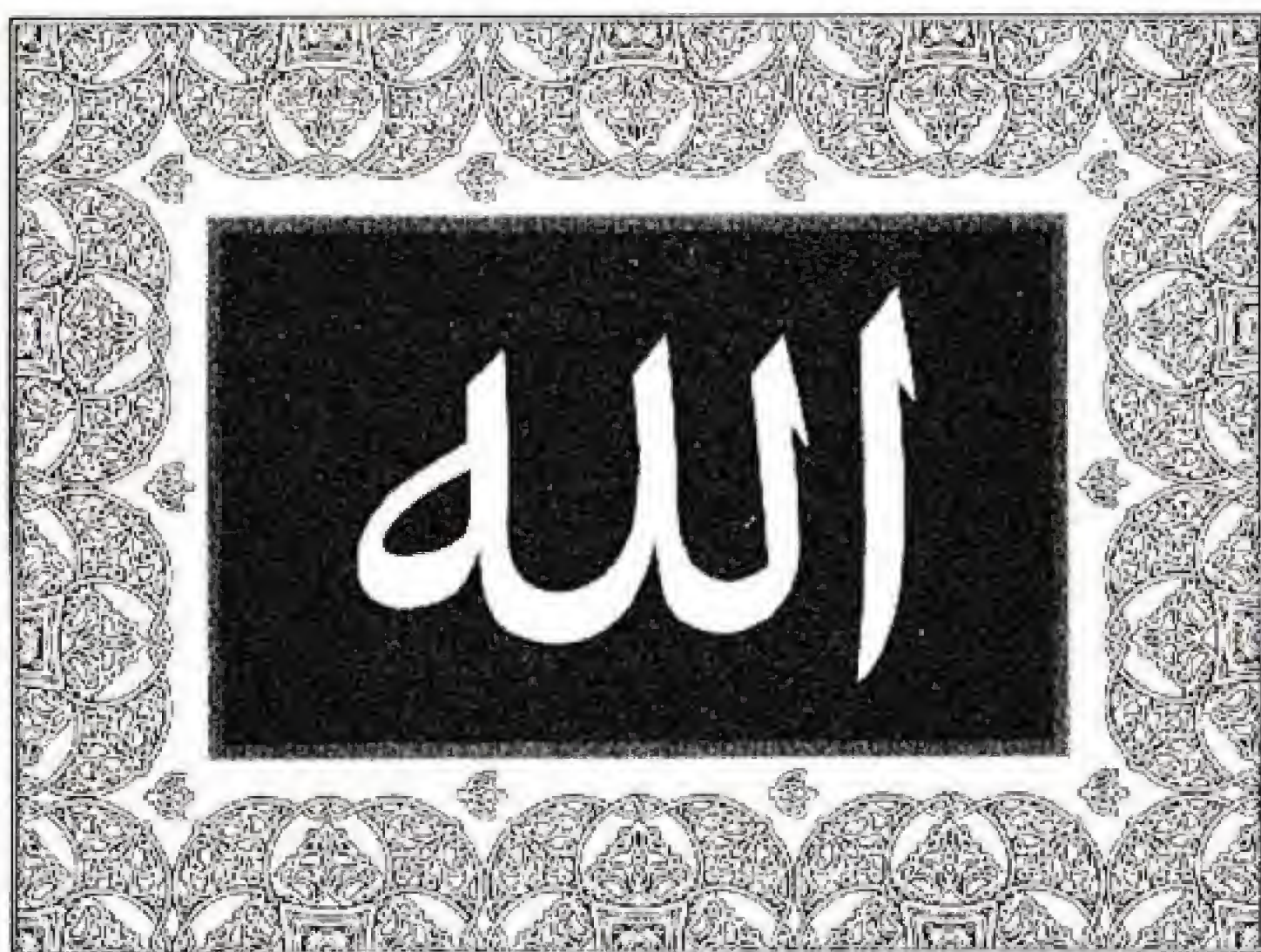
Question: "Do you know of a good way to maintain peace in marriage, a way to preserve respect and love between husband and wife? With all the tensions of everyday life married people often start to yell at each other and quarrel. Is it possible to prevent this?"

Look, our Grandsheikh always used to say that we must use wisdom on every occasion, particularly in those situations in which Satan is playing his favourite role: that of the housebreaker. In the family situation Satan always tries to act out his disruptive and destructive intention towards the marriage, as marriage is the thing he hates most. He is outraged by happy couples and particularly by marital fidelity. His goal is to stir up people's passions and then direct those people to satisfy their passions illegitimately, outside of the marriage. If a person marries, Satan makes it his business to run after those people and try to destroy that legal spiritual bond. You must know this, as it is the basis for understanding marriage problems and for defeating Satan, devils and evil. If you don't understand this point you will be unable to solve your marital problems, and the situation will get worse day by day.

Sometimes Satan attacks from the husband's side, making him wild with anger and jealousy. Sometimes Satan attacks from the wife's side, making her like a mad woman, wild with jealousy and misunderstanding. Now when you notice that Satan has mounted your mate, and is spurring him or her on

to quarrel with you, don't give any reply. Just remain silent and say to yourself: 'Satan is riding on my mate; I must leave him ride until his mount gets tired and he dismounts'. Then, when you see the change you must try to soothe him or her and talk gently with soft caresses, yes.

Don't try to argue with an angry person! An angry person won't even listen to Allah or His Prophet, so how shall he listen to you? All that you say or reason out will only fall on deaf ears or even serve to whip him or her up into even greater frenzy; so better to be patient and not reply. Remember that it takes two hands to clap; if you withhold your hand, that one hand will wave and wave, but if it doesn't meet with another hand it will finally tire and stop. That is the way: you will never find a better way to maintain family unity. It is the way of wisdom.



SOUL CAN FIND SOUL

Allah Almighty has given us life that we may use it as He pleases, and what pleases Him from our actions are those actions that are beneficial to our fellow men. There is a very simple rule of thumb regarding our actions: Do all that you can to serve people, and avoid all that may harm others, though it be beneficial to you. All Prophets sent to all peoples at all times have taught this to their followers. It is an unchanging, unchangeable religious principle.

All activities from which people benefit have been permitted and encouraged by religion. And other activities, such as earning one's livelihood, must at least not be harmful to people. But in our times so many undertakings are embarked upon without the slightest regard for their being beneficial or at least benign. If people see the possibility of some material benefit for themselves in an activity, they never ask what the results of that activity may be for anyone else. They say: "I don't care what happens to anyone else but myself. If it is profitable I must do it; that is my only criterion". But people are going to be killed! Everything is going to be destroyed! He replies: "That's too bad, but don't tell me about it, I really don't care — I care only about myself."

As this mentality is so prevalent in these times it is imperative for a believer to believe that his business or job is beneficial to mankind, or at least not harmful. He must not be a monster without a conscience, and must be careful to avoid all harmful activities. This is a plain reality stressed in all

religions by all Prophets in all times to all peoples: no one can object. Our brother, Sheikh M., asked me about some practices and diets devised in order to give spiritual and physical benefit to people. We shall say, at least those who propagate these methods and diets believe they are beneficial, and they may be right or wrong. If they are beneficial they may find acceptance and may be practised by a few people: but if a method is harmful for people or useless, Satan himself will certainly make it his business to propagate it personally so that it finds great acceptance among people, and you will see millions of people destroying themselves or wasting their time following those methods and diets. Because the age we live in is the Age of Satan's Dominion he finds it extremely easy to harm people as he wishes. He looks and sees that something will harm or distract people from good deeds, and he sponsors it, endorses it and even personally offers his services as chief publicity manager.

Therefore, it may easily be observed in our times that every group that flourishes and meets with stupendous success is a sick group and that their teachings and practices are flawed. In the Age of Satan's Dominion you can't plant a good fruit tree and expect it to survive. Probably weeds will choke it, or there will be a drought, or there will be a flood or a freeze or a pestilence. And even if it does grow to become a sapling, some goat will come and eat it.

When I explained this situation to Sheikh M. he replied: "Well, if that's the case maybe we should pray that we are unsuccessful — better to be nothing than to give evil fruits." I don't mean that we should despair of bearing sweet fruits, no;

what I mean is that we should be aware of the odds we are up against in this time, and set our expectations, if we have any, accordingly, so we are not surprised to see so many people following misguidance.

Yes, groups that are following a right path, a path that leads to real benefits for its followers and for people in general, even in this time may grow — but not like other groups. The bad or useless groups may be seen to be increasing quickly, but rightly guided groups grow very slowly, too slowly. But, knowing this we have no need to despair and lose hope. We are pleased if we can be successful even one-tenth of one percent of the time. But misguided groups are “successful” 200% or 2000%, so rapidly do their membership rolls, and especially their bank accounts, increase. We never anticipate such outward prosperity, for even Prophets, (even our Prophet Muhammed) Peace be upon them, were not 100% successful. They were only sent to serve as examples and they were not responsible for their peoples’ giving up stubbornness, egoism and misguidance.

“Whoso follows the guidance does so to his own spiritual benefit, and who is misguided harms himself.”

“(Oh Muhammad), you will not be asked about their actions nor they about yours.”

Yes, even if we can benefit only one in a thousand with goodness we are happy. What is important is that you move, that you work toward your lofty goals. Don’t sit complacently! For within the person who has been shown a right way and feels the beneficent power of the contact with

Allah's Saints in his life, there arises the desire to bring suitable and well-intentioned people into contact with the same blessings. This is from the heart's compassion. Allah Almighty is calling His Creatures to His Divine Love, and He uses those who have been touched by that love as a means for His taking the hearts of others back towards Himself. When that love has touched you you will feel compassion stirring in your heart, a compassionate love that is contagious.

Look, a young person aroused by the fires of passion will be impelled by those fires to walk the streets. He or she leaves their house with a firm intention and a driving desire. They will find what they are seeking, (though it would be better for them if they didn't!). That young person will find a partner for his passion, because his or her intention is firm: if one escapes, three more will come! We can learn from this a Divine Law: firm intention and determination is the key to success in a venture. So, if donkey can find donkey, soul can find soul.



THE PURIFICATION OF OUR FAITH

One of the five pillars of Islam is called "Zakat", that means the purification of our money and properties by annually giving away one-fortieth of it to the needy. This is a well-known aspect of Islamic Law: that the rich share their wealth with the poor so that their wealth may bring them blessings and goodness rather than affliction and envy.

But there is also another kind of Zakat in Islam, and in the sight of the Naqshbandi Tariqah it is the most important Zakat: the Zakat or purification of our faith. What is the purification of our faith? To give of our faith to someone else, to be the means of bringing someone into the blessed faith of Islam. Ultimately it is Allah Almighty who opens the hearts of His servants to His faith, yet He orders us to make ourselves the means by which He acquaints His servants with the blessings a servant who believes in his Lord may receive. We can obey this Divine Order by making ourselves perfect examples of the beneficent effect of that faith on man's being and character, and by sharing the light that shines forth from our sincerity and humility.

Now, our brother has been the means for the guidance of our new brother H. to Islam. Thus, by leading one man to the truth, has he given the Zakat of his faith. The Holy Prophet, Peace be upon him, once said: "To be the means by which one person is guided to the truth is better for you than the whole world and what it contains." Therefore, the Prophet's companions spread out over the face of the Earth in order to

share with others what they had been blessed with. Faith is a wonderful tree which the believer is called upon to plant where he can, in any suitable place, then to tend it as best as he can to insure that it may have a chance to grow. And so you must not be satisfied just to lead a person to belief, but you must extend to him all the help and encouragement you can so that his faith may grow stronger. You must be a true brother or sister to that person so that the roots of that sapling may grow deep and the branches spread and ultimately yield fruit and seed.

Yes, if you see a beautiful tree you must try to plant it elsewhere also. Some plants are grown from seed, some by implanting branches in the earth, some by planting a piece of root or bulb, and some by grafting a piece of bark onto an existing tree. You must take wisdom from this example and become skillful gardeners, using the right methods for the right plants in the right season. What we are saying is that you must use your wisdom and compassion in dealing with those beginners who look to you for guidance: be perceptive of their particular needs and particular situations, like a gardener.

We are not urging you to call people to our way like parrots, repeating the same thing in the same way to every person without discrimination. You must look and see what door is open and enter from that door. Don't just kick in the first door you find! Don't be like those door-to-door preachers whom people flee from on sight and cross the street just in order to avoid. Be true gardeners: don't chop down a tree that only needs grafting and plant a seed in its place; also, don't graft good bark onto a dead stump.

SMOKING: THE HOLE IN THE LOCKED DOOR THROUGH WHICH THE THIEF ENTERS

I asked our new Muslim brother how he is succeeding in his attempt to live as a Muslim. He replied: "I am doing well. I have started to perform the prayers and fasts that Allah has ordered and have left most of the well-known forbidden actions. The only problem is that, up until now, I have been unable to quit smoking." I told him:

Look, cigarette smoking in the sight of people, particularly in the sight of Muslims, is something of little or no effect on a person's character, and because they see it as being of no account and as having no effect on their religious lives, Muslims, more than others, smoke like chimneys. But their thinking couldn't be more mistaken.

When you accepted Islam you managed to leave behind all of the well-known and most harmful prohibited actions, and that is very good - not everyone can do that so easily, immediately upon his accepting the faith. The only big problem, you say, is that you are addicted to tobacco, that it occupies your heart to such an extent that leaving it is a great struggle which you can't seem to win.

Our Grandsheikh, Sheikh Abdullah Ad-Daghistani, may Allah be pleased with him and make him pleased with Him, used to say that cigarette smoking, even if it is of no account in the sight of people, is, in reality, one of the greatest weaknesses a believer can have, as the cigarette habit leaves its

victim completely bereft of willpower. Cigarettes catch people and destroy their willpower in such an absolute way that if he cannot cut himself off from the smoking habit, one day smoking will cut him off from every goodness, even from faith itself. This is the main and overriding reason for quitting the cigarette habit (among all the numerous other very strong reasons): he must leave it once and for all so that he may take his willpower into his own hands, and thus protect himself from falling under the control of others. When I say "others" I am mainly referring to his own lower self and Satan, who stands in the background as the evil advisor to the ego. Who cannot control himself may lose control over himself so that his being passes into the hands of his animal self and Satan, who are ready to destroy the humanity of your soul.

Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an: "Oh My people, you may see something as being of no consequence, but in My sight it may be of immense consequence and gravity." Now cigarette smoking is at most a small vice in the eyes of Muslims, but in the sight of Allah Almighty it is a fatal weakness in a believer; it is like a small hole in a door through which a burglar may enter. Now you have just closed the door on all the major sins that are most displeasing to Allah Almighty, but what good does it do as long as that hole remains? What purpose does such a door serve? You might as well leave it wide open for all the good it does! Perhaps you may say: "It is a thick oak door and I have shut it firmly and locked it well, what difference does a little hole make, it doesn't matter." What doesn't matter? Say it doesn't matter once the thief has opened the whole big door by putting a

wire through, the hole and run off with your treasure!

Therefore, if a person leaves such a hole for Satan to enter through and gain control, he is exposing his faith to great danger. And so I say to our brother: You have left so many forbidden actions which are displeasing to your Lord. You have locked that door, now you must think of what you can do about that cigar-ette-hole.



Sheikh Muhammad Adil

MUSIC

Question: "What is our relationship to music?"

The Sheikh:

Whenever we find some activity to be enjoyable we must ask ourselves whether that activity also makes our Lord pleased with us. If the answer is 'yes' then you know that such activities are alright.

When we refer to music and to whether there is any merit in it in the sight of Allah, we cannot speak of "music" as if all different kinds of music are one and the same. One must make distinctions. One kind of music, and the best music in the sight of Allah, is divinely inspired music, such as the music of several of the Sufi Tariqahs in their remembrance of Allah, most notably the Mevlevi whirling initiated by Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi, may Allah sanctify his blessed soul. It must be clear that there is a vast difference between such music and the satanic, sexually arousing music of the discotheque.

Yes, the music of those Tariqahs is divine music: they sing heavenly songs that touch our souls gently, turning our attention to the inner realities and eternal life; they bring our souls a pleasure that makes our hearts open wider and wider to divine inspiration until you feel your heart to be full of Divine Love. How can such music be termed reprehensible, or sinful?

But nowadays when people refer to "music", they usually mean pop and disco music, the kind of music that not only

distracts the mind, but fills our hearts with darkness, sadness and misery. It is the kind of music that Satan uses to control those who don't have a firm command over their willpower, and to push them into the pit of spiritual pollution. Even an older or middle aged man like our friend here, if exposed to such music, may start jumping around like a devil; even chains cannot hold people when such music enters their blood. Such music is so dangerous that even those who can exercise their willpower flee from such sounds, taking refuge in their Lord from the Accursed Devil.

Perhaps while listening and dancing to such music you may feel a type of enjoyment, but when the party is over and you return to your house, turn your gaze inward: there you will find your conscience condemning you for exposing it to such degradation; and you will repent for having left a way for such darkness and sadness to overtake you. Listening to that kind of music never makes our Lord pleased with us.

Therefore, our relationship with music depends on our own conscience; it may tell us if the music is uplifting or otherwise. Consult your conscience, and if there is a clear positive response, then don't worry, that music may be divinely inspired.

According to tradition, on the Day of Resurrection the four Angels who bear the Divine Throne will be glorifying their Lord with such beautiful litanies that all the souls gathered on that day will lose their self-awareness in complete absorption in that beauty — they shall be beside themselves and in their Lord. The recitation of Holy Qur'an is also divine music, as our Holy Prophet, Muhammad, Peace

be upon him, stressed that it should be recited in a beautiful voice. And so, divine music has an important place in our religion, since our Prophet has advised that through beautiful recitation the Holy Qur'an may best reach our hearts.

Now the distinction between music for our Lord and music for our lower selves is clear. The same clear measure applies to everything, not only music. Islam applies this measure to all aspects of life and culture in order to determine whether they are permitted or prohibited. All good things of this world and the next (Tayyibat) are permitted to us, and Islam has the greatest tolerance of all religions for the channeling of man's multi-faceted energies and creative impulses into acceptable and laudable activities. Islam gives to people the best of everything, in this world and the next, and never seeks to instill negativity in its followers. Rather than encouraging total rejection of this life, Islam encourages us to seek the good and wholesome in social relations, in food, drink and clothes, the best for body and soul.

But Islam never tolerates actions which are intrinsically associated with darkness — harmful to individuals and to the society (Khabaith). Islam distinguishes clearly between these two groups, Tayyibat and Khabaith; it aims at awakening the conscience of its followers, so they may become capable of distinguishing right from wrong.

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Music is not rejected by Islam in an absolute manner; but, as you know, Islam is a religion of discipline, and its judgements are not necessarily going to accord with people's imaginings or opinions. In Islam, people must arrange their

lives in accordance with the Divinely revealed discipline, and part of that discipline is that we are told to avoid all those paths that lead to evil. Some of the paths that are interdicted by Islam may appear to be safe at the beginning, but if we follow them we will find out what danger lies on them and what harm results to our faith. Therefore, Islam takes care to determine the direction of any path and to block those paths that lead over cliffs from the beginning.

We aren't declaring music to be something categorically evil, but through its misuse it may become the main reason for evil to appear — and everything that causes evil is prohibited by Divine Commandment in Islam. Most Western people are obsessed by music and are incorrectly thinking that their whole lives, their inner lives included, are dependent on music. They are like little babies to whom music is like their mother's breast, and until they are weaned they can't live without it. But when those little babies discover solid food they may leave suckling and find that there are more important activities in life. Therefore we are not discouraging Westerners who are beginners on this path from listening to or playing music: we are only saying to them that they must be careful of music, and not let it carry them away from their spiritual lives and trap them under their egos' command. To be under your ego's command is prohibited. Modern pop music, especially disco music, renders its listeners slaves to their egos, so that even if they are tied with ropes they must break them to writhe and jump about. Who loses control of his ego gets carried off by the torrent of evil, losing his dignity, his honour, his faith and humanity.

But other kinds of music, such as folk-and-country music, or non-devotional classical music, usually fall between the two categories of beneficial and harmful, and therefore needn't be encouraged or discouraged by religion. As far as serious classical music is concerned, it usually tends toward the side of divinely inspired music, as classical musicians, and particularly composers, are not like ordinary people but are seeking to open themselves up and to immerse themselves in endless reality. For that reason also, not everyone is listening to classical music, and most people don't know what to make of such music.

Some kinds of light music are for the common folk which they may listen to for relaxation and to temporarily lighten their burdens. As long as it is not sexually arousing it may be acceptable as well, as a means for people to enjoy themselves at weddings, celebrations and on their holidays. We have nothing against such activities, only, in Islam, folklore-dances should be segregated affairs: ladies celebrating with ladies, and men with men.

Yes, such light music and celebrations are alright in their limited functions, but when such distractions occupy too much of people's attention they may also prove harmful. Such pastimes and other recreational activities, like watching television, are the twentieth century means of making people forget themselves and letting their minds wander in fantasy. But the main point of our work is to bring people back to themselves, to help them approach their inner beings.

People are running away from a shadow which is themselves, that is why they are ill - and the harder they run,

the more their miseries catch up with them. They flee from themselves all their lives in pursuit of a desert mirage that turns out to be nothing but sand. After all that struggle to reach that "oasis" and to quench their thirst, they find that their struggles and false hopes have only made them more parched and that much closer to death for their efforts. When they arrive they drink the draught of death and must face a meeting with their Lord for which they are unprepared. This is the fate of those who waste away their lives in vain amusements.

The main goal of Islam and of Sufi Paths, especially the Naqshbandi Path, is to bring people back to themselves, to teach them to stop fleeing from their own shadows and from chasing mirages. When they turn to themselves they may find everything present in themselves, even the whole universe, and they may receive endless Divine help, never again tiring or being overcome by exhaustion or depression. Yes, Divine treasures are within you, but to attain them is like climbing Mount Everest; to reach that summit, as everyone knows, one must undergo arduous training, and even then if he hopes to succeed, one must be patient and perseverant in traversing narrow, difficult passages and steep cliff walls. But if you are lazy you will never seek such treasures — you will be satisfied with treading the beaten path.

Now followers of every religion are fooling themselves by anticipating only ease on their ways, and they never strive in the manner that peoples of ages past used to strive for that spiritual goal. The Holy Prophet. Peace be upon him, said: "He who is patient and perseverant ultimately succeeds". But

without patience and perseverance you may be like a person who sits and watches scenes from an Everest expedition on television and imagines that he has been to the summit along with the mountain-climbers. Thus the people of our times are satisfied with vicarious living, and are never willing to take the difficult steps toward any summit. This is an important point to understand.

Every new invention that supposedly serves man becomes another shackle, a bond, making man its prisoner. Among all of this century's inventions television and video have been put to the most destructive use by Satan, so that he has succeeded through them in making man a slave bound by every hair in his body. Previously slaves were bound by their necks, wrists and ankles, but today's slaves are bound by every hair on their bodies. Such addictive habits as television and video-viewing are destroying people's mental and spiritual lives, so that if they are deprived of that stimulation they will be miserable, bored and unable to enjoy their life at all. But a person who lives simply and doesn't become dependent on complicated technology for his physical or mental life will be happy and able to cope with any condition of life. Therefore, a part of the solution to our problems is simplicity, as it opens the doors to rest and inner peace, whereas a life dependent upon the functioning of complicated technology that may someday break down makes us slaves to a very unreliable master. For this reason we are advising our followers to learn to cope with life without complicated appliances, to know how to make do with very simple implements so that they are not taken by surprise.

People of the last century may have been in need of ten or fifteen implements, basic tools, for survival but now we depend on thousands and thousands of things, and we are in fact slaves to those needs. That is the disease called the "consumer society" - in which things are quickly invented, produced, advertised and sold as absolute necessities, when in reality one can do very well without them.



Sheikh Nazim Al-Qubrusi
(May Allah Sanctify his Blessed Soul)!

WHY ISLAMIC ASSOCIATIONS OFTEN GO WRONG

It is a symptom of the illness of the degenerate time in which we live that people may be content and at peace with their fellow Muslims as long as they remain in the routine of their homelife and jobs, but when they come together supposedly for the sake of their religion, they quarrel among themselves, and hatred and enmity begin to sprout up everywhere to choke the tree of sincerity and brotherly love.

In all the different communities with which we have had contact we always hear the same story: A community of Muslims exists in friendship. Someone figures out a way to obtain outside financial support from a rich Muslim country or organization; an Association is formed in order to put this money to use to benefit the Muslims, but everyone's ego gets stirred up by the presence of so much money and many start to cast covetous eyes on the funds, vying for positions of power in the Association, in the hope of being able to fill their pockets. Love of being "Number One" takes over as the members compete for power in the positions of President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc., like a bunch of worldly politicians. Money and status occupy their hearts and minds, and they quarrel so much that no benefit arises from their efforts. No such Associations will ever be successful in serving Islam, and they may in fact harm Islam by driving away sincere people.

I have been with the Cypriot Muslims on behalf of my Grandsheikh for forty years, and thanks to Allah Almighty I

have been given the opportunity by my Lord to travel this island from end to end and visit Muslims in virtually every village and every mosque. Everywhere I have gone I have encountered a few people who love their Lord and His beloved Prophet and the Inheritors of the Holy Prophet. Among those interested people there always were good relations and mutual love.

But now that the Cypriot Muslims have formed themselves into a type of Association, they have fallen into disputation and bickering so that their aspiration and enthusiasm have weakened and they have stopped listening to their "spiritual headquarters", though it is incumbent upon them. This being the case, I advise our brothers not to form associations outside of their mosques. As far as mosques are concerned, the administration of them is clearly defined: a mosque must be under the care of three qualified and dedicated people, the Imam, Muezzin and Mosque-Keeper, and the qualifications for those positions are adequately defined by such matters as knowledge of leading the prayers correctly, uprightness of character and availability for daily service. No one should quarrel with those three as long as they do what they can for the mosque and its congregation.

As believers it is our duty to do our best to call people to Islam and to call Muslims to the practice of Islam; and it is our duty as well to make sure that we call people to Islam in the best way, with perception and wisdom. But we must seek to accomplish this duty through our own means and with our own energy, and not grow dependent on huge influxes of money from wealthy Muslim countries, who with their

money would make us pawns for their political ends, and lead us into cheating ourselves and others. We would thereby acquire only greed and insincerity.

It is as if we had some pure milk; even if it is a modest amount of milk it is pure and nourishing. Then along come some insincere people with vast quantities of water for us to add to our milk, in order to fool people with a watered-down drink sold as the original thing. Such actions are strictly prohibited in our religion, as the Holy Prophet said: "Whoever cheats people is disassociated from us." This is a very important point: for the sake of money people lose their sincerity, fall in love with money and power, and then they call it an "Islamic Association". It is a blatant and manifest lie; such associations are "Money and Power Associations," that is all.

Money will never bring sincere people into Islam, nor make non-practising Muslims into better Muslims. If this were the case we would now see millions and millions of new Muslims in the mosques of these worldwide associations which are pouring money into propagation of Islam in Europe and America. Instead, all we see are bureaucracies that cannot draw even five sincere people to Islam and only send those who come to ask about it away cold, successfully alienating newcomers who come to Islam through other ways. Only by sincerity and strong faith can we ever be successful in our efforts to purify ourselves or to be examples for others. Instead, however, we insist upon destroying ourselves and others by running after wealthy countries for their money. That is the illness of our egos.

ISLAMIC EDUCATION FOR THIS DAY AND AGE

The Sheikh received the following letter from the founders of "Dar-ul-Islam", a rural Islamic community in New Mexico. After expressing their greetings and requesting the Sheikh's blessing and prayers for them, the text read:

"We have begun a small Muslim school here based on the pattern of the Islamic Madrasah. We want to develop a strong programme of Islamic education based both upon religious and worldly knowledge. We would like to consult with you on what would be the best form of education for our children in order to prepare them for life in the modern world. Please bear in mind that we will try to use your answer."

"At present our children are studying Arabic, Qur'an, Islamic Studies, Fiqh (Islamic Law and Jurisprudence), Stories of the Prophets, Sirah (Biography of the life of the Prophet Muhammad), Mathematics, Science and English. The school is organized so that all grades are in one room on a nearly one-to-one basis with their teachers. We would be very grateful for any advice you could give us regarding curriculum, teaching methods and goals. We don't know if we can implement your ideas, but we will certainly contemplate them and do the best we can. The parents of the children will also welcome your help."

The Sheikh:

Know, that if we have been asked a question we shall give a reply with the permission of spiritual authority. You must be aware that these are not my words, rather I am asking spiritual

power centers for a useful answer for the brothers and sisters of the Dar-ul-Islam community. I start by saying "Bismillahirrahmanirrahim" (In the Name of Allah, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful), as under this honourable title I don't think that their message will be lost or that I will speak wrong words.

It is our belief that the Holy Prophet. Peace be upon him, was sent to mankind to complete the task of all of the earlier Prophets, Peace be upon them all. His task was to teach people what benefits them most in this life and the next, and to educate them to live in the best of ways. The Seal of Prophets, Sayyidina Muhammad, taught his companions, and they, in turn, taught mankind what they had learned from the Holy Prophet.

One of the Prophet's closest companions and his son-in-law was Sayyidina Ali, who was blessed with deep insight into matters of both inward and outward religious concern; indeed he was one of the Holy Prophet's true heirs. In one of the many wise sayings of Sayyidina Ali which have been recorded and passed down to us, he said: "You must educate your children with an eye toward the future, anticipating the conditions they will face when they grow up, and preparing them to deal with that world. Therefore, remember that the world is always undergoing change, and don't educate them for your own time, leaving them unprepared for what they must do."

In accordance with Sayyidina Ali's holy words of divine wisdom we must try to educate our children to deal with the future, and we must use teaching methods suitable for

accomplishing that task. Our Holy Prophet Muhammad, Peace be upon him, once said: "Wisdoms are our lost property, therefore, anywhere we come across them we should recover them." The import of this Hadith is that a Muslim must be aware; he must be aware that this is a wide world in which it is his right and duty to look from East to West, to the heavens and to the earth, that he may find the lost wisdom that is his property.

In educating our children, therefore, we must be very versatile in our thinking so that we may put these two pieces of advice into action: to prepare our children for the future and to use every available wisdom in doing so. They must grow up to be bright and aware Muslims in order to keep their faith in a predominantly non-Muslim society, and indeed, only by taking these two important pieces of advice firmly into hand can we hope to succeed in such a formidable task.

In order to have any hope of succeeding we must understand the wisdom contained in the following example: It is our duty to remain like pure water, and to be careful about maintaining our purity and avoiding pollution. But if we are poured into a clean bottle we have no objection to taking the bottle's shape for as long as we are in the bottle. And if that bottle is tinted, it may appear that the water is coloured, but it is not: the water remains clear and clean, its characteristics exactly the same. Therefore, we must have the goal in the education of our children to make them good Muslims in a society of many temptations, to teach them how they may keep their purity by learning how to distinguish between clean bottles which they may enter and filthy ones they must

avoid.

Yes, this is a very important point, and we will draw some general guidelines for you to think over. For example, in this letter our sister says that all grades are together in the same classroom on a nearly one- to-one basis with their teachers, but I think that in the neighbouring communities the students are separated according to age in different grades and that each student and teacher has a private seat in the classroom. It is alright if you do it in the same way - no harm - so that when your children come together with other children and perhaps talk about or even show them their school, those children won't feel estranged from your children and think that Islam is a very weird and wrong way that forbids classrooms and seats (and therefore condemns everything they have been taught). Your school may look similar to other American schools, but it should give your children an education and training that will help them keep the purity of their faith. You may use all modern techniques and guidelines for teaching your children, but they must be based on Islamic principles.

Now I see from your letter also that your curriculum is an "overdose", a dosage prescribed for young adults on their way to becoming scholars, not a dose suitable for children. We are not going to make all the children into Muftis and Qadis; it will become clear when they are older which of them have an inclination in that direction. For the children in general we must give common and practical knowledge about Islam and make such teaching interesting and enjoyable so that they may become attracted to their religion, not repelled and burdened

by it and as adults come to hate Islam. You must know that no religion can be as tolerant as Islam, particularly in respect to the younger generation. We must apply such tolerance so they may find comfort and feel pleasure in their religion. If we cannot manage to impart an Islamic education in such a manner we will never be successful.

By tolerance I do not of course refer to tolerating lack of discipline in school and bad behaviour, no; what I mean is that huge burdens of religious knowledge should not be forced down the children's throats against their will, as there is no compulsion in religion. Therefore, we must try to give them more classes under the title of "worldly" knowledge and impart divine knowledge through that medium, but shifting the emphasis or focus from what might be taught in classes of the same name in other schools. Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) may be taught on an elementary level in the context of "Social Studies". Stories of the Prophets and particularly the biography of the Prophet Muhammad may be taught in the context of "History"; and other Islamic subjects may be given through such subjects as Science and Mathematics.

You may ask what the wisdom is in applying such a method. For example: a person may be in need of more iron in his diet. Now if we go and buy iron filings from a merchant, spoon them up and swallow them, is it good? Is that the best method? What need is there for such a terrible mouthful when Allah Almighty in His endless Power and Wisdom has commanded the roots of plants to search in the Earth for atoms, molecules and tiny particles of iron, draw them up,

and make them available for our consumption in the edible and delicious forms of lentils, spinach etc. Reflect upon this: in such an iron-rich diet lies the cure for the iron-deficiencies of the body, not in the force - feeding of iron filings. That is what wisdom demands. If you can understand the purport of what we are saying you may meet with success, otherwise, all of your methods will be comparable to giving spoonfuls of sulphur to children rather than feeding them eggs. Which is more suitable for the body?

We are seeking new methods suitable to our time and to a Muslim community in America, not trying to cling to old methods that were suitable in a different age. New methods must give students Islamic knowledge and characteristics through modern knowledge. Don't create artificial separations between "worldly" and "otherworldly", as such a separation is, in any case, foreign to Islamic thought, which presents a unified and harmonious outlook on a believer's life in this world.

Remember to present Islam as a living and joyful way of life through the example of your own life, and by showing tolerance alongside firmness and determination in imparting Islam to your children. Try to awaken their interest and get them to ask questions and seek to know more about Islam. Don't make them feel imprisoned, let them feel freedom in a school that accords with the better side of their nature.

Remember that it is the nature of the lower self to do the opposite of what it should. Therefore you will find that when you push out, it pushes in, and when you push in, it pushes out - and the harder you push the harder it pushes. Knowing this

you must not start such a wrestling match in motion, but you must show your children Islam and Islamic life so that they won't be seeking a way out, but will be trying, to enter.

This is our program, and it is the best one, as I am not speaking on behalf of my ego, but from our spiritual center and from where has come direction for our new Muslim brothers and sisters regarding their children's education.

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I am very sorry to say that our educators, even in the Islamic countries, can no longer successfully impart Islamic realities to their students. The reason for this is, as we have pointed out, that they are trying to force-feed "iron filings", "sulphur" and "calcium" to the children. That is the method of people who lack wisdom, and the result is that children come to hate Islam and Islamic topics and never approach Islamic practices. So bad are their methods that today's teachers and scholars even manage to make themselves allergic to Islam, so that they, even more than others, are quick to leave every practice, and may only be seen to teach in order to make a living from it.

People are waiting to taste delicious new fruits from the Holy Qur'an and the sayings of the Holy Prophet, Peace be upon him; but to taste those fruits they are in need of real teachers who have inherited wisdom, not only knowledge from the Holy Prophet. It is that wisdom alone that enables true teachers to impart knowledge and, most importantly, love of Islam to their students, as that wisdom opens their eyes as to which methods will be effective to accomplish the task at hand. Sometimes a tree may be in need of grafting, of

bringing some bark from another tree in order to produce new and better fruits. The root of this great tree of Islam is eternal and unchanging, but the fruits of each time may vary so as to be easily digestible for those who eat them.

Some people will certainly accuse us of condoning the introduction of non-Islamic methods into Islamic education, of creating harmful innovations. Such reaction will be testimony to the blindness of those people. Our faith and practice are eternal, and all the teaching methods we may adopt are for the purpose of perfectly imparting that faith and practice. Do they not understand the implications of the Prophet's saying: "All wisdoms are a believer's lost property that he may recover anywhere," and his saying: "Seek knowledge even unto China"? Can they comprehend nothing about the Islamic approach by knowing that a church building may be purchased and turned into a mosque, and needn't be torn down for a new mosque to be built from the foundations? Besides, the Holy Qur'an states that it encompasses all things "wet and dry, large and small" — new understanding gushes forth eternally from that fountain. If your eyes have been opened you may perceive unlimited meanings in its Holy Verses; it is the ultimate key to that portion of our Lord's knowledge that has been made available to man; therefore, in reality, nothing is outside its scope. You must know this and believe it.

* * * * *

Today's Islamic scholars can be very strict in their dealings with their students, showing no tolerance or compassion, while they never judge themselves with the same strict

measurements or standards: ready to tolerate laxity and sin in themselves but not in others. It is very rare indeed to find a tolerant Islamic scholar, despite the fact that our Prophet, Peace be upon him, has declared the Islamic code to be the most tolerant of all the divinely revealed codes of law.

We must practise the widest possible tolerance and have the most leniency in relation to new Muslims and their children. Behaving towards such delicate young "saplings" in any other manner, in ways that emanate from the teacher's own ego can do irreparable harm to that person's faith; it can be like pouring acid on the roots of a young tree. Whoever does such a destructive thing will carry a very heavy load of responsibility in the Divine Presence and may face his Lord with a heavy burden of blame.

Therefore, I am warning all the teachers of new Muslims, and be they Egyptians, Pakistanis or other, to be very careful in their behaviour towards them, to watch themselves closely, and ask themselves whether they are succeeding in instilling love of Islam in their young charges. Remember that they are very new to Islam and have not been raised in an Islamic society. So if you have an urge to be very strict, be so with yourself and be most forbearing with them. If you cannot lighten your hand with regards to those new Muslims then you had better do something else with your time than trying to teach them.

Ponder on the following Hadith Qudsi, in which Allah Almighty declares: "La ilaha ilia Allah (Declaration of faith in the Unity of God) is My Fortress, and whoso enters My Fortress has secured himself safety from My punishment."

What statement of mercy from our Lord could be more encompassing than this? We must emulate this Divine tolerance with every new Muslim. And might I point out, that in reality the new Muslims are applying themselves one-hundred times more than the scholars themselves are in their attempt to observe the Divine code of law, striving with sincerity to learn more and more and to live according to that knowledge. Remember that forbearance and tolerance draws hearts to the obedience of their Lord while the portrayal of Islam as a very, very narrow path frightens people away and closes their hearts.

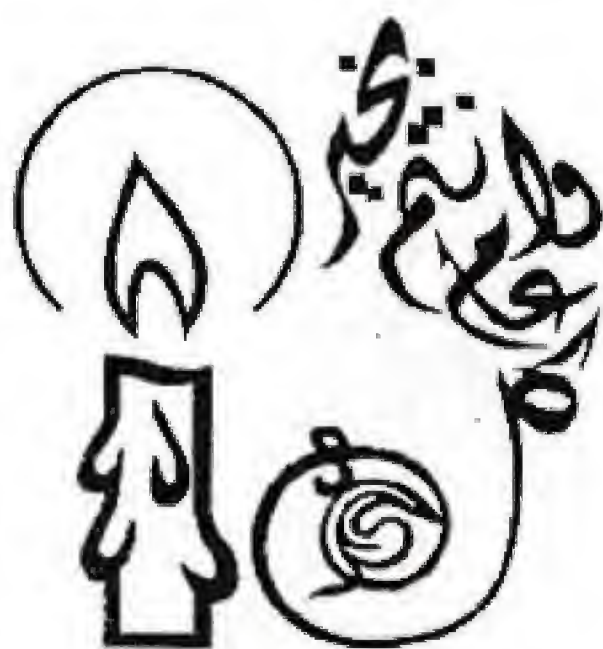
May Allah keep us from mistakes and misguidance, especially in religious matters.

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LOVE

Love is the bond that binds hearts, the basis upon which to build. If love is the foundation, your building will withstand all earthquakes and storms; and you may build it as high and wide as you please without it being in danger. Therefore, our Way is the Way of Love. Leave what is keeping you from following that Path and turn to follow it with perseverance; follow this path all the way to your destination...



**The Golden Chain
Of Spiritual Transmission
Of the Naqshbandi - Khwajagan
Masters**

1. The Holy Prophet Muhammad
Mustafa, Peace be upon him.
2. Abu Bakr as-Siddiq
3. Salman al-Farsi
4. Al-Imam Qasim bin Muhammad bin
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq
5. Al-Imam Ja'fer as-Sadiq
6. Abu Yazid al-Bistami
7. Abul Hasan al-Kharqani
8. Abu Ali al-Farmadi
9. Yusuf al-Hamdani
10. Abul-Abbas (Khidr, upon whom be Peace)
11. Abdul Khaliq al-Ghujduwani
12. Arif Righwari
13. Mahmud al-Faghnawi
14. Ali Ramitani
15. Muhammad Baba Sammasi
16. Seyyid Amir Kullal
17. Qutub at-Tariqah Shah Muhammed Bahauddin
Naqshband al-Uwaysi al-Bukhari
18. Alauddin Muhammad al-Attar
19. Yaqub al-Charkhy
20. Ubeydullah al-Ahrar as-Samarqandi

21. Muhammad az-Zahid
22. Dervish Muhammad al-Bukhari
23. Hajegi Emkeneki as-Samarqandi
24. Muhammad al-BaqibiUah as-Samarqandi
25. Mujaddid al-Alf ath-Thani Imam
Rabbani Ahmad Faruq as-Sirhindi
26. Urwat ulWuthqa Muhammad Ma'sum
Ar-Rabbani
27. Haji Sayfuddin ar-Rabbani
28. Nur Muhammad al-Badwani
29. Habibullah Mirza Jan-i-Janan al-Mazhar
30. Ghulam Ali Abdullah ad-Dehlawi
31. Ziyauddin Abu Naasan Muhammad
Khalid al-Baghdadi ash-Shami
32. Sheikh Ismail an-Narani
33. Khas Muhammad Shirwani
34. Sheikh Muhammad Yaraghi
35. Sayyid Jamaluddin al-Ghumuqi al-Husseini
36. Abu Ahmed as-Sughuri
37. Abu Muhammad al-Madani
38. Sayyid Sharafuddin ad-Daghistani
39. Sultan al-Awliya Abdullah ad-Daghistani
40. Sultan al-Awliya Sheikh Muhammad Nazim
Adil al-Qubrusi
41. Sheikhuna wa-Ustazuna Sheikh Muhammad
Adil al-Qubrusi

Fatiha





People are running away from a shadow - a shadow which is themselves, that is why they are ill - and the harder they run, the more their miseries catch up with them. They flee from themselves all their lives in pursuit of a desert mirage that turns out to be nothing but sand. After all that struggle to reach that "oasis" and to quench their thirst, they find that their struggles and false hopes have only made them more parched and that much closer to death for their efforts. When they arrive they drink the draught of death and must face a meeting with their Lord for which they are unprepared. This is the fate of those who waste away their lives in vain amusement.

The main goal of Islam and of Sufi Paths, especially the Naqshbandi Path, is to bring people back to themselves, to teach them to stop fleeing from their own shadow and to stop chasing a mirage.